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P R E A C H ' D

At *Guilford* in the County of *Surry*,

A T T H E

A S S I Z E S

H E L D T H E R E,

J U L Y the 14th, 1708.

B E F O R E T H E

Right Honourable the Lord Chief
Justice *Holt*, and Mr. Justice *Powys*.

By J O H N C Æ S A R, Vicar of *Croydon*,
And Chaplain to the Right Honble
S C R O O P Earl of *Bridgewater*.

Published at the Request of the High Sheriff.

L O N D O N:

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1870

Journal of the

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JOHN DEWYE, Esq;
High Sheriff of the County of Surrey.

S I R;

I Know I shall please you much better, in the Observation I am going to make of the Occurrences which have happen'd in the Tear of your Shrievalty, than if I could present you with the most lively Strains of Wit and Eloquence that ever adorn'd a Dedication : Because I am proud to tell the World, that I am so well acquainted with you, as to be assur'd, that you are too Modest to be pleas'd with hearing your own most Just Commendation, and too Wise to bear being Flatter'd. Besides, the Hearty Love you bear to our Countrey, makes the Prosperity of it the Thing you cou'd read with the greatest Satisfaction; and with no less could I write of it, if I had a Genius equal to the Noble Subject. At our First Assizes we receiv'd the Agreeable News of the Disappointment of our Enemies Arms; and at the Second, the Joyful Account of the Success of our Own; and the Nation triumph'd within a few Months, for the Enemies being Baffled at Sea, and Beaten at Land. May it still be their Fate, to do as they did on the Occasion of the late Invasion, to triumph before Victory : And may our good God continue such Blessings to us, as that our Glorious Generals, His Grace the Duke of Marlborough, and Prince Eugene, may conduct those Troops to the Confines of Picardy, which the French so little a while before thought to

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have

The Dedication.

have seen employ'd in the Defence of Edinburgh. This English Hero has so taught his English Troops to Conquer in Places where they had never been, even on the Bank of the Danube; is now leading them to Fields where formerly they have been, and been the Terror and Scourge of France; even to the very Fields of Cressy and Agincourt; the Glory of both which He rival'd at Blenheim. Within the Compass of the same Memorable Year, we hope to give Thanks to God, for shewing us marvellous great Kindness in a Strong City; when a future King of France, with the whole Power of his wasted Dominions, was Witness of its Danger, which he could not Relieve. These, Sir, are some, and but some of the Famous Actions of this Year: For I mention not the Kingdom of France being enter'd on one side; Islands being recover'd to the True King of Spair; the Treasure and Support of approaching Campaigns driven back to the Mines out of which it came; and other distant Successes: And these are proper Subjects for our Publick Joy, and Congratulations of Her Majesty, with our Fellow Englishmen; and these may be allow'd to be likewise a private Satisfaction to my self, as they have happen'd in the Time of your Office. And beyond these, we have nothing to wish or pray for, to add to and establish our Happiness under Her Sacred Majesty's most Auspicious Reign, but an Honourable and Lasting Peace: Which no-body does either wish or pray for more heartily, than,

S I R,

Your Obliged, and
most Humble Servant,

Croydon, St. Luke's
Day, 1708.

J. CÆSAR.

J E R E M. XXIII. Part of the 10. V.

Because of Swearing the Land mourneth.

IF any Age since that in which the Prophet made this Complaint, had Reason to joyn in it, ours has; and if any Land had ever Reason to mourn because of Swearing, this has, of which we are Inhabitants: And therefore, it is our Duty to lift up our Voice, from this Place especially, against this Sin, after the Example of the Holy Prophet, that the Warning of the Danger of it, may be, if possible, as Loud in the Church, as the Vice it self is in our Streets. Besides too, there is a good Reason why the Faults of Swearing should be declar'd against on this Occasion, because, it is by Swearing in a due manner, which the same Prophet *Jeremy* tells us in another Place, *Cap. 4. 2.* should be *in Truth, Judgment, and Righteousness*; that the Main of the Proceedings of this Assembly is to be determin'd, whether it concerns Men's Reputation or Estates on the one side, or their Lives on the other. We are told by *Tully*, That among the Heathens, the Wisest of them could invent no stronger Tie to oblige Men to be faithful, than an Oath; and that many Things are confirmed by an Oath: And the Word

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of God assures, that *an Oath for Confirmation is to Men an end of all Strife*, Heb. 6. 16. So that without a due Regard to the Sacred Obligation of an Oath, Justice cannot be administred between Man and Man, Controversies cannot be decided, and consequently the Peace and Quiet of Societies cannot be preserved. Without a due Regard to an Oath, Leagues of Peace between Kingdom and Kingdom will not be observed: As appears plainly by the many Instances, in which, both Peace and Oaths have been broken together by the Mighty Oppressor, against whom we are engaged in a Just War on that very Account: One wou'd think, He swore to Treaties by no other God, but that Leaden One, which one of his Predecessors *Lewis XI.* carried in his Cap, and kissed and ask'd Pardon of, when he commanded any one whom he fear'd or hated, to be murder'd: But whatever Glory He aspires at by his Conquests, He must leave as loud an Infamy for his Breach of the most Solemn Oaths. And as Nations are thus preserv'd in Peace with each Other, by a Religious Regard to Swearing, so particular Ones are bound to Fidelity and Loyalty to their own Princes by the same Tie: And if, even this does not always secure Princes from Attempts against their Crowns and Lives too, how much greater Danger would they be in, if it was Universally slighted. I am afraid, this would not have preserv'd our most Excellent
Queen

Queen against the late dangerous Enterprize, tho' one wou'd think Her Piety, Justice, and Clemency, shou'd have kept Her Subjects Faithful without any Oath, and much more with one : I am afraid, I say, of this, because, had our Foreign Enemies landed, there might have started up some Domestick ones, to have joined them, who had before Sworn to the contrary. To a due Regard to an Oath, I was going to ascribe all the Blessings of Her Majesties Reign, but that I consider it is her Innate Love of Justice, her Truly *English* Heart, and her Tenderness towards Her People, that constrain Her to have no Interest separate from Her Countrey's, as much as any Oath can bind Her : And as no Oath can bind all Her Subjects to be Loyal to Her, so She wants none to be indulgent to them all. From which Important Uses of Oaths, it appears that Human Society has no Enemies more dangerous than such Men as do any way promote Infidelity and Irreligion among us ; because they weaken the Obligation of an Oath, they slacken the Sacred Band of Conscience, without which, no Worldly Consideration is strong enough, to bind Men to be Just, Honest and Peaceable : It concerns therefore all Mankind, but especially the Civil Authority, to have the Reverence of an Oath secured ; and when we persuade our Hearers to this, it may be call'd Priestcraft, but it ought to be allow'd to be Reason of State. And

since the right Use of an Oath has such mighty Influence upon all the great Affairs of Life, the Abuse of it must be highly provoking in the sight of God, by whom we swear; and may be a just Cause of our Countrey's Mourning either for the Natural Ill Consequences of such Abuses, as that, common Faith shall fail amongst Men; which *David* cries out on as a dreadful Forerunner of the Destruction of the World, *Psal. 12. 1. Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, the faithful fail among the children of men.* Or our Countrey may mourn under particular Judgments of God for Sins concerning Swearing; as the Land of *Judea* did, when it suffer'd Three Years Famine for the Breach of an Oath made by *Joshua* Four Hundred Years before, *2 Sam. 21.* Of all which Abuses I shall pitch upon Two to warn Men against at this time, for which our Land does, or ought to mourn, and for which God prevent our Mourning under some of his sore Judgments: And those Sins in Swearing, are,

1. Common, Familiar, and I had almost said Fashionable Swearing in all our Conversation. And,

2. Downright Perjury, and Mens Forswearing themselves on the most Solemn Occasions.

1. Then, Common, Familiar, and I had almost said Fashionable Swearing in all our Conversation. And certainly, there cannot be a more Rational Way of persuading Men to avoid this Customary Way of Swear-

Swearing, than to convince them of the great Sin of doing so ; for if this does not prevail with them to leave it off immediately, yet it must convince them however that they ought to do it ; and that will in time, I hope, deter them from that sinful Practice. And

1. I would desire them to consider, what the Nature of an Oath is, what dangerous Words they toss about on their unhallowed Tongues, that they may understand and fear an Oath, and not thunder them out in every Sentence : And an Oath is calling upon God to witness the Truth of what we say ; and to be an Avenger and Punisher of us if we do not speak the Truth. *It is binding our Souls with a Bond, Lev.*

3. 2. Binding them even to Damnation, according to the Phrase of our Modern Modish Oaths. And is this fit to be done upon every trifling Occasion, and almost every time a Man opens his Mouth ? Is Everlasting Torment and Misery such a slight Thing, that Men should call for it upon themselves ? Or if the Prophane Swearer believes nothing of this, why then does he use so many impertinent Words that in his own Opinion signify nothing ? He must mean either the most dreadful Thing, or Nothing : He must speak the most desperate, or the most senseless Words that can be, every time he swears or curses. Again, an Oath is allow'd to be a very serious part of our Worship of God ; because, we
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do acknowledge Him thereby, to be a God of all Knowledge, and so able to discern our most secret Purposes, and the most private Intentions of our Hearts ; we own Him thereby, to be a God of all Truth, who delights in Truth ; and a God of Justice, who will punish those, who swear by his Name, and not according to Truth : An Oath does signify our Belief in these Attributes and Perfections of God : And ought not the Consideration of such a Being to strike more Awe into every Man's Mind than to dally and trifle with him ? To challenge Him to stop our Breath almost as often as we fetch it ; to have a God of Infinite Knowledge, Justice, and Power, to pour down Plagues, Death, and Damnation upon us at every turn. Besides too, what Rudeness and Disrespect does it shew to our Blessed Saviour, to have his Name prophan'd, when St. Peter assures us, *Acts 4. 12. That there is no other Name under Heaven given among Men whereby we must be sav'd.* What Barbarous Ingratitude is it, to speak slightly and immodestly of the most precious Blood of our Lord, and of his dreadful Wounds made by the Nails and Spear ? Is not this shewing the World, that we count it, or would make it an unholy Thing ? How can we reverently eat that Flesh, and drink that Blood in a spiriritual Sense, with the same Mouth with which we abuse them : But ah ! how how shall we plead that Blood, and those Wounds
by

by which we might be heal'd for the Pardon of our Sins, which we have so unworthily and impiously us'd in our Discourse? Or will that Vocal Blood plead for us, when we have curs'd our selves by that, as much as they did who shed it; when they desperately wish'd it on them and their Children. *Mat. 27. 25.* No; it may cry out against us, and come to speak worse Things against us, than that of *Abel* did against *Cain*. But

2. The Great and Heinous Wickedness of Common and Customary Swearing, is apparent from the immediate and direct Affront that it is to the Great God of Heaven and Earth. Other Sins do not so sawcily defy his Power, so impudently and daringly challenge him to let fly his Vengeance: For many of them are committed in the deep of Mens Hearts, or sneak into Corners and Darkness, and are call'd in Scripture, *Works of Darkness*; but this ecchoes in the Streets; it braves God's Thunder, and almost vies with it in Loudness. So that he seems oblig'd to assert his Authority by some Stroke of his Omnipotent Arm; if it be but to keep up a Belief of his Being and his Providence among Men; who may call both in Question, if such daring Wickedness receive no Check. If God does not sometimes *cause a Land to mourn* on such an Account, he will not be thought to have made it: If Men prevail
thus

thus with their Tongue , they will soon say, *Who is Lord over us ?*

3. Another Reason, why this Swearing in Common Discourse is very Sinful , and consequently to be avoided , is , because our Saviour has told us so expressly , *Mat. 5. 37. Let your Communication be yea yea , nay nay ; for whatever is more than this cometh of Evil :* That is, it proceeds from an Evil Principle ; either from want of Reverence towards God ; from Contempt of Religion ; from Pride of Mind ; or from the Temptation or Instigation of the Devil, the Evil one ; who , by this may ensnare Men into Infidelity ; which seems, indeed, to be the natural Consequence of it, because none of our Sensual Inclinations are gratify'd by it in the least. Many other Sins may plead strong Temptations of Pleasure or Profit ; but Swearing cannot : And since it has no such Pretence , it may be suppos'd to issue from a Disbelief of God's Being or his Providence , or else from a wretched Temper of Sinning for Sinning's sake. Such Men seem to love this Sin, as the *Jews* hated our Saviour , *δωρεάν* , without a Cause, as the Word *δωρεάν* often signifies : And so in the Prophet's Phrase , *Isa. 52. 3. They sell themselves for nought.* This is the only Hook of the Devil that is quite naked, without any Bait to hide or sweeten it. We can hardly say he tempts to this Sin ;
but

but Men are drawn away and enticed without him ; and for that Reason are guilty of an higher Degree of Sin, and of Folly too , if Folly could ever be separated from Sin. But the

4th and last Proof of the Heinousness of this Sin, which I have Time to mention, is, That it oftentimes leads Men into Perjury. Of the Prodigious Guilt of Perjury, I shall enlarge further under the Second General Head ; and content my self to shew at present, That Common Swearing naturally brings Men to this, and therefore is exceedingly sinful. And certainly, when Men swear at random, or as Passion provokes, Humour prompts, or Carelessness hurries them ; they must often swear Things to be true , which they know not, or are not sure to be so : They will often promise Things upon such Rash Oaths , as it is impossible, or sinful for them to perform. We may all observe, how inconsiderately, Men given to this Vice, either begin or end every wild extravagant Sentence with Oaths or Curses. They throw them out so thick and profusely, and so like the most idle Words, that they cannot regard Truth in them all. Men may indeed delude themselves with thinking, that they swear in jest ; but the Obligation of an Oath is not to be jested away. The Nature of Sin does not change with the Opinions Men take up about it. Besides, this has a great

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Tendency to the most Deliberate Solemn Perjury. For, will he who has accustomed himself to Swear commonly, regard an Oath as he ought to do in the most Serious Matter? It is not likely he should, as one who on all Occasions fears and reverences an Oath, and dares not use it, for fear he should be forsworn e're he is aware. And thus, from the Consideration of the Nature of an Oath; the Affront it is to the Majesty of God; the plain Saying of our Saviour, that it proceeds from Evil; and the Likelihood that it will end in Perjury; appears the great Sinfulness and Wickedness of Common and Customary Swearing: And from the Sinfulness and Wickedness of it, it as plainly appears, That Men ought not to begin it; or to leave it off, if they have. And so I proceed to the Second General Head, viz.

II. Downright Perjury, and Men's Forswearing themselves on the most Solemn Occasions.

But before I set my self to shew the great Guilt of Perjury, I shall briefly explain what it is; that Men may know when they commit it, as well as what Danger they run by committing it. And all Oaths are of Two sorts; either Assertory, or Promissory. An Assertory Oath is always concerning something that is past, or present. As, when a Man swears, Such a thing was, or was not, so or so, a Year, or Month, or any Space of Time past;
or

or is, or is not, so or so now. And this kind of an Oath is of most Use in the Affairs of this Meeting. All Matters of Fact concerning Men's Lives or Fortunes, being determinable by this sort of Oaths only. 'Tis true, indeed, that the Promissory Oath, which is always made in respect to the Time to come only, does bind the Honourable the Judges, and the Gentlemen of the several Juries, to execute the Office they are afterwards to enter upon, faithfully and conscientiously : But they proceed, as I said before, in the Execution of that Office, according to the Assertory Oaths of Witnesses. Or, if any one say, as some have, that in every Oath there is a Promise ; because Witnesses, when they take their Oaths, do promise to answer all such Questions as the Court shall demand of them. I answer ; that in Strictness this is true : But that the Promise and the Performance come so near together, that the Time of Promising and Performing may be said in some Sense to be the same. And besides, the Answers which the Evidence make, are all Assertory : So that the Division of Oaths into these Two Kinds, may be allowed. Now, to know when a Man is forsworn as to a Promissory Oath ; He forswears himself, who swears to do that which he does not intend to do : Or, if he does intend to do what he swears, but does not do it afterwards, he is forsworn. As to Assertory Oaths ; He that

affirms a Thing upon Oath, which he knows to be otherwise, is forsworn. Nay, if he affirms a Thing that he is not sure of, tho' it be true, yet he is perjur'd: Because Men ought to be certain of what they affirm upon Oath. And in both Kinds of Oaths, those Persons are guilty of Perjury, who use Equivocations, or Mental Reservations; that is, have two Meanings; one, which the Hearers understand; and another, which they reserve to keep in their own Mind, to salve the Truth of what they say. This, I say, I question not to call Perjury; notwithstanding it is defended, and, what is worse, practis'd by too many Christians, to the Dishonour and Hindrance of the Christian Religion; and it would be to the Destruction of all Society, if it was generally us'd. If it be a little more Refin'd Perjury than ordinary, it may in that respect, indeed, suit the Maintainers of it: But if all their Policy had been spun no more finely than this, the World wou'd not have fear'd or felt so much from them, as it has done. Thus far one Man may be guilty of Perjury alone. And 'tis possible, that Two or more may be involv'd in the Common Guilt, tho' but of one Act of Forswearing. As, when Men bribe or suborn a False Witness; one of them swears, indeed; but before God they are both, or all guilty of Perjury. Nay, there are many ways in Impannelling Juries, Awing of Witnesses, using
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Arts to draw Things from them that they do not mean, and the like; which I would not give either a harder or a softer Name to than they deserve; but, I doubt, do oftentimes border upon Perjury.

Having thus explain'd what the Nature of Perjury is, and how Men may be guilty of it, I come to shew the Greatness of the Guilt, in order to persuade Men to avoid it as one of the greatest Sins that a Man can be guilty of: And

1. The Heathens who never knew the Reveal'd Will of God, but govern'd their Lives by the Law of Nature only, were very sensible of the Heinousness of this Sin; and many of them punish'd it in a severe Manner, even with the Loss of Life. They thought their Country so like to mourn and suffer because of this dreadful Abuse of Swearing, that they endeavour'd to wipe off the Crime by the Blood of the Criminal. They thought that the Posterity of perjur'd Persons wou'd suffer for this Sin of their Ancestors; which Opinion they never entertain'd but concerning the highest Crimes that Men could commit: Nay, in this they went further, that the Will to commit it, tho' in Fact it was not committed, would be punish'd; according to the known Verse of *Juvenal*;

Has patitur pœnas peccandi sola voluntas :

With this he concludes the Account of a Spartan,
who

who doubted only whether he should forswear himself ; and for the Inclination only, which he did not put in Execution, for Fear not Honesty, *metu non moribus*, says the Author, he was struck dead, and all his Children, and his very distant Relations, (*Sat. 13. v. 199.*) *Longâ deductis gente propinquis.*

But besides what they then, and Christians now, have made the odious Punishment of this Sin, as if the Almighty design'd to shew his particular Detestation to, and Discountenance of it ; we find in all Histories both Sacred and Prophane, multiplied Instances of strange and terrible Judgments from Heaven falling upon the Heads of perjur'd Persons, as a present Punishment of that Sin ; intimating, that if God's Rectoral Justice seem'd concern'd to inflict the worst of Miseries and Disasters upon some such Sinners in this Life, the same Justice wou'd, as it were, still oblige him to consign them to the worst of Torments in the next.

What a secret and invisible Vengeance has attended them, not only to the particular Ruin of themselves, but the Devastation of whole Families ? Yea, its Contagion has been still more general, and even whole Nations have felt the dismal Effects of it, as the Text alledges ; and so does that Passage of *Zech. 5. v. 4.* where speaking of the Curse that goeth over the face of the Earth, says, that *God will bring it forth, and it shall enter into the house of him who sweareth falsely*
by

by the Name of God, and shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof; it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it; implying, not a Personal and Single, but a Family, nay, an universal and complicated Curse of a whole Nation, which by the secret and unseen Judgment of Heaven undermines Estates and Families, to their utter Ruin and Devastation. And the Flying Roll mention'd in the First Verse of this Chapter is generally interpreted to point out and intimate the Indiscernableness and Swiftmess, as well as Fierceness and Unavoidableness of this Judgment. Of so very dangerous and pernicious Consequence is it, even in this World, to make bold with Sacred Things, and to call God's Name to attest a Lye. This, tho not always the Fate, yet is always the Desert of Perjur'd and Infidious Persons, and what God has often, and may always justly inflict: And tho some Offenders may escape, yet none can pretend or warrant Security and Exemption: 'Tis what all may fear, and have Reason to expect: Which is but a just Argument to persuade all those who have been guilty of it, to repent of their Wickedness, as it is to dissuade all those that have not, from its Practice, as they tender the Welfare of themselves, the Security of their Estates from a cankering and corroding Curse, and the good Foundation and Establishment of their Posterity. For God
will

will not suffer his Honour thus affrontingly to be abus'd, nor will he esteem him guiltless who thus takes his Name in vain ; but his just and terrible Vengeance will always, will always await him ; and tho' God's Longanimity and Forbearance, which is design'd to bring Men to Repentance and Happiness, should defer the Execution of it in this Life, (tho probably it may be otherwise) yet,

2dly. Will it most infallibly find him out in the Life to come : When the hottest of God's Fury and Anger shall be pour'd out on those Audacious and Miscreant Wretches, who durst violate God's Honour, and take his most Venerable and Holy Name into their prophane and unhallow'd Lips, and set his Eternal Veracity to a Falshood : Then will his Jealousy burn like Fire upon those Sinners ; nay, the hottest and most intolerable Tortures will be doubtless reserved in Hell for such, as having been the most infamous and affronting Rebels. And God will now most severely execute upon themselves, what they have so often provoked and challeng'd the Almighty to do.

God Almighty deal so with me, at the Final and Terrible Day of Judgment : May I be forever Happy, or Damn'd to all Eternity, according to the Truth or Falshood of the Thing I now affirm : May I ever live to see and enjoy my Ever-blessed Maker and Redeemer ; or be totally and finally
banish'd

banish'd his Presence, and consign'd to a perpetual Cohabitation with the Devil and Damn'd Spirits; are Things of such Eternal Consequence and Importance, (and which every Oath includes) that they ought to be weigh'd with the greatest Nicety and Exactness, with the greatest Deliberateness and Precaution; as what may prove the most fatal and irrecoverable Things. The Almighty may take us at our Words, and say *Amen*; and may execute that Terrible Sentence which we have call'd down, and drawn upon our selves.

What need I say more to discountenance this Complicated Sin of Perjury, than by shewing the Judgments that have in this Life already, and those that will hereafter be inflicted upon it? Which is more Severe, as being more Heinous than most other Sins. For it is a Sin against God, in an open Contempt and Violation of his Holy Name. A Sin against a Man's self, in imposing upon his Conscience, and acting against the Impulse and Direction of it. A Sin against a Man's Neighbour, in doing him wrong, and subverting the common Methods of Justice. It is an Infringement upon Human Society; and whoever is guilty, hardly deserves the common Benefit and Advantage of it.

What I have to say further, shall be by way of Address to the Guilty, and Innocent; those who have fallen into this Sin, and those who have not.

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To

To the First.

Tremble, O ye Sinners! who have been guilty of your own Damnation, and have sealed it with your own Consents and Desires; who have anticipated the Divine Sentence, and, as it were, have engag'd God to see it executed finally and effectually upon you. Consider and think of this, all ye who forget God. Think what Dishonour you have done to your God; who is a God that is able to punish, as well as jealous of his Honour: Who will take Vengeance of all these Ungodly Deeds, which Ungodly Men have dishonourably spoken against him. Think, that this is the grievous Consequence of so ill-natur'd and devilish Sin, as nothing but the Miraculous and Undeserv'd Mercy and Forbearance of God has as yet deferr'd the Execution of the Judgment of God upon; so nothing but thy timely and sincere Application to that God thou hast offended, for Mercy and Pardon for thy Sins past; nothing but a sincere and vigorous Repentance, can ward off the Blow of his Wrath in this World, or revoke and cancel them, so as not to meet with the hottest Severity in the next. Invoke and supplicate God betimes: Detest and abhor thy Guilt: Resolve and endeavour, by Watchfulness, Care, and a serious Consideration, to reform and amend: That God may remove this great Sin from thee, and thou may'st not die.

2. But

2. But to those who have hitherto cautiously avoided that Sin, from the Heinousness of the Crime, and the Severity of the Punishment, let me warn you to continue resolute and circumspect; (and here I apply my self to all you that shall be call'd upon to take an Oath :) Let not the Fear and Affection of Men bias and sway your Consciences, to the Breach of Truth and Justice, and with this the Forfeiture of God's Favour. Set Him always before your Eyes, as an Observer of what thou doest. Make the Cause thou art concern'd in thy own, and then act with that Integrity and Justice as thou expectest from other Men; nay, make it the Cause of God, and think that the Great Patron of Truth and Justice will be honoured or dishonoured by either thy upright or unjust Dealing: Think likewise, that as God observes thee, it is with some Design to punish thy Perjury, or reward thy Fidelity. The Business thou art concern'd in is noble, and necessary to set them to Rights who suffer Wrong; in which thou art not misemploy'd, and without doubt shalt not be unrewarded.

I will conclude all, with those Excellent Sayings of the Son of Sirach concerning these Two Sins (I have been treating of) *Prophane Swearing, and Perjury, Ecclus. 23. 9, 10, &c. Accustom not thy mouth to swearing, neither use thy self to the naming of the Holy One. A Man that useth much swearing shall be filled with*

with iniquity, and the Plague shall never depart from his house. If he shall offend, his sin shall be upon him; and if he acknowledge not his sin, he maketh a double offence; and if he swear falsely, he shall not be innocent, but his house shall be full of calamities.

And to represent to us the dreadful Nature of this Sin of Perjury; There is (saith he) a word that is cloathed about with death, meaning a rash and false Oath; There is a word that is cloathed about with death; God grant it be not found in the heritage of Jacob: For all such things shall be far from the godly; and they will not wallow in these sins. From which, God preserve all good Men, and make them careful to preserve themselves; as they value the present Peace of their own Consciences, and the Favour of Almighty God in this World and the other, for his Mercies sake in Jesus Christ: To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, now and for ever. Amen.

F I N I S.

